

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 490

By Ford

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Thomas Hovatter.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Thomas Hovatter on June 18, 2007; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, Mr. Hovatter became ill with a condition that proved difficult to diagnose and treat, and by the time he and his wife, Jennifer Hovatter, finally learned that lymphedema was causing his terrible and painful swelling, along with a host of other symptoms, he was already in a rapid decline that ended with sepsis, major organ failure, and finally death; and

WHEREAS, in honor of her husband, and on behalf of all those who suffer from the debilitating illness of lymphedema, Mrs. Jennifer Hovatter has committed her own life to raising the public's awareness of lymphedema and finding a cure for the disease; and

WHEREAS, it is her hope that the story of her husband's life and early demise will serve not only as a memorial to him, but also a call to action; and

WHEREAS, born September 5, 1963, in Jonesborough, (Roy) Thomas Hovatter was the son of Judi and Roy Hovatter; an accomplished athlete as a young man, Thomas Hovatter played football and wrestled at David Crockett High School; and

WHEREAS, following high school, he continued his education at Tampa College; after graduating as a computer technician, Thomas Hovatter assumed a position in Technical Support at AFG in Kingsport; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hovatter served AFG with acumen and alacrity, earning the respect of his peers and superiors alike for the exemplary quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, outside his professional life, Thomas Hovatter was a kind and gentle man of faith and compassion who brought joy to his family, his friends, and all those who knew him; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hovatter will be sorely missed not only by his wife, but also by his sister and her husband, Lori and Sankler; and

WHEREAS, an avid outdoorsman, Mr. Hovatter was particularly fond of fishing, and when Mr. and Mrs. Hovatter were still dating, he tried his best to teach her how to fish; her husband's earnest attempts to share the sport with her have become some of her fondest memories; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hovatter was very fond of his dog, Buddy Lee, who kept Mr. Hovatter company while his wife was at work, and Buddy Lee returned his master's affection; the 160-pound Rottweiler would become quite jealous, even of Mrs. Hovatter, if he sensed that his master was awarding his attentions to another; and

WHEREAS, both committed Christians, Mr. and Mrs. Hovatter often read the Bible together, and their common faith helped them through the pain and uncertainty of his illness; and

WHEREAS, the Hovatters drew great strength from their marriage, and while her husband is no longer with her, this fortitude continues to maintain and inspire Jennifer Hovatter as she strives to work toward a cure for lymphedema and inform her fellow citizens about the disease; and

WHEREAS, on June 20, 2009, Hosanna Fellowship Church in Johnson City will host a an event to promote Thomas Hovatter Lymphedema Awareness Day; a variety of exhibitors, venders, and entertainers will gather there to help Jennifer Hovatter as she works to inform the public about lymphedema and the critical need for further research and better treatment; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Hovatter leaves behind an indelible legacy of courage and integrity, and the story of his life and untimely death should be shared so that others with lymphedema, the families who suffer with them, and all the citizens of this State might find some comfort and learn more about this illness; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional Tennessean and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Thomas Hovatter, reflecting fondly upon his

impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Hovatter, especially his wife, Jennifer Hovatter, who works ceaselessly on behalf of all those who suffer from the disease of lymphedema.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.